

Women say they do most chores, child care: AP-NORC poll

By BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Business Writer

When it comes to household duties such as changing diapers, handling chores and meals and managing family schedules and activities, many couples who don't have children expect that they will more or less share the work equally should they have kids one day.

The reality is not quite so rosy — at least for mothers. A new poll from the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy and The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that although women generally expect to do more in their household, Americans without children are still more optimistic that they would share responsibilities equally with a partner compared with what parents report actually happens. That's true even when factors such as the



Consumers shop at a grocery store in Niles, Ill., Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021.

Associated Press

age of respondents are taken into account. The poll asked about eight specified household responsibilities and found

that 35% of mothers report doing more than their partner for all eight, compared with just 3% of fathers who report the same. For in-

stance, about half of mothers said they are completely or mostly responsible for providing transportation to their kids, while only about

a quarter of fathers said they are responsible for all or most of it.

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Women say they do most chores, child care: AP-NORC poll

Continued from Front

By contrast, majorities of both men and women who are not parents said that if they did have kids they'd share equally in things like providing transportation, changing diapers and attending to children waking up at night.

Mothers and fathers had different ideas about who does the bulk of household chores. For instance, 21% of mothers said they and their partner both equally attend to children if they wake up at night, while 49% of fathers said the same thing. So who is right?

"When you look at time use data, women are more correct than men," said Yana Gallen, assistant professor at the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy, who worked on the poll.

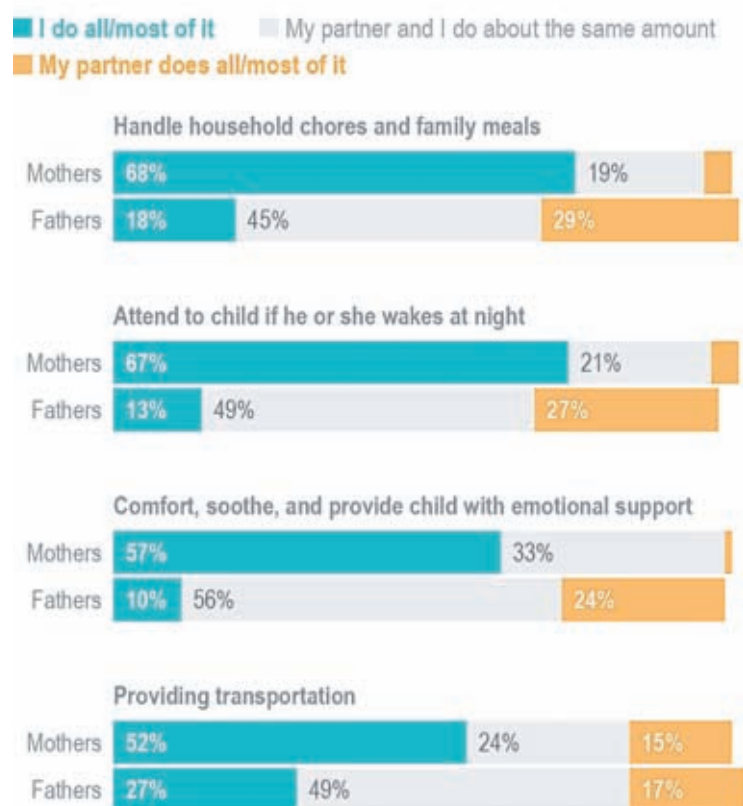
Life can also complicate the best-laid plans. Liana Price, 35, who has a 4-month-old baby who came as a "very much wanted surprise" during the height of the coronavirus pandemic when Price was undergoing chemotherapy treatments on her hands and had a pregnancy complication, said she stopped working in January as a result of everything going on.

"Things just kind of changed very drastically. And suddenly for us, we didn't really have like a plan," Price said. While Price and her husband had planned to both work full time, with her taking maternity leave offered by her job as a registered nurse, instead she quit her job and they be-

Mothers more likely than fathers to say they do most household work

A new AP-NORC poll finds that in addition to responsibilities like household chores and transportation, mothers are more likely than fathers to say they provide most or all of the emotional support for their child.

Who would you say does more of each of the following in your household?



Results based on interviews with 1,054 U.S. adults conducted Oct. 7-11. The margin of error is ± 4.0 percentage points for the full sample.

Source: AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

AP

A new AP-NORC poll finds that in addition to responsibilities like household chores and transportation, mothers are more likely than fathers to say they provide most or all of the emotional support for their child.

Associated Press

gan to run through savings. Still, she says she and her husband divide child care equally — including attending to night wakings. "When I was breastfeeding, there was no point in him getting up in the middle of the night. But now that I'm formula feeding, we alternate nights," she said. "However, during the day my husband does work

from home. He travels, too. So when he travels, obviously everything is on me." Experts say one reason women report doing more house and child care work is not only because they actually do more — which is often true — but also because men are not always aware of all the work involved. That includes planning family activities and organizing appointments and even things like providing children with emotional support.

The poll found that 57% of mothers said they provide

"all or most" emotional support to their children. Only 1% of mothers said that their partner does. In contrast, 10% of fathers said they are the primary provider of emotional support to their kids, while 24% said it's their partner.

Much has been said about the effects of the pandemic on women, including many women who left or stepped back from the labor force to take care of their children or aging parents. The U.S. lost tens of millions of jobs when states began shuttering huge swaths of the economy after COVID-19 erupted. But as the economy has quickly rebounded and employers have posted record-high job openings, many women have delayed a return to the workplace, willingly or otherwise.

In the spring of 2020, roughly 3.5 million mothers with school-age children either lost jobs, took leaves of absence or left the labor market altogether, according to an analysis by the Census Bureau. Many have not returned. A recent report by the consulting firm McKinsey & Co. found that one in three women over the past year had thought about leaving their jobs or "downshifting" their careers. Early in the pandemic, by contrast, the study's authors said, just one in four women had considered leaving.

"But another thing that happened during the pandemic is a lot more jobs became remote and working from home became OK with a lot of jobs," Gallen said. "So I think that actually really helps women in the workplace because a potentially big problem has been that, women don't feel like they can take some of the higher-paying

jobs available" that involve travel or long hours away from home.

"So this pandemic kind of moved forward a shift to more female friendly conditions and many jobs," she said. This includes schedule flexibility and, for jobs in which that's possible, remote work. Women are more likely than men to say flexibility at work is important when thinking about whether or not to have a child, 74% versus 66%, according to the poll.

It's not just the division of household responsibilities that having kids can throw into a loop. It's been well documented that having children can hinder women's careers, both when it comes to pay when compared with men (including men with children) and advancing to better jobs.

According to the poll, 47% of women say having a child is an obstacle for job security at their current or most recent job, compared with 36% of men. Americans under 30 were especially likely to say that, compared with older adults.

Amy Hill, who is 31 and lives in West Virginia, said she's happy with her home division of labor, even though she does more than her husband. That's because he works in the coal mines, doing 16-hour shifts away from home. Her work, while steady, is not full time — she does makeup for proms, weddings and other events.

"I think it helps not being around each other a whole lot because I miss him when he's gone, you know?" she said. "As long as we've been together, he's been working underground. And also, he doesn't really fold the towels the way I want them to be folded." □



Senate votes to raise debt limit by \$2.5T, avoiding default

By BRIAN SLODYSKO

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate approved legislation Tuesday to lift the nation's debt limit by \$2.5 trillion under a deal struck between party leaders, defusing a volatile issue until after next year's midterm elections while saddling majority Democrats with a tough vote.

The 50-49 party line vote came just one day shy of a deadline set by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, who warned last month that she was running out of maneuvering room to avoid the nation's first-ever default. The measure now moves to the House where a vote could come as early as Tuesday night, sending it to President Joe Biden's desk.

"This is about paying debt accumulated by both parties, so I'm pleased Republicans and Democrats came together," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said of the agreement, which created a workaround that allowed Democrats to avoid a Republican filibuster.

Despite a seemingly straightforward name, the nation's debt limit does little to curtail future debt. Established in 1917, it instead serves as a brake on spending decisions already approved by Congress and the White House — some decades ago — that if left unpaid could cripple markets, send the economy into a tailspin and shake global confidence in the U.S.

That hasn't stopped Republican saber-rattling. For months, they've used the debt limit to attack Democrats' big-spending social and environmental agenda while pledging to staunchly oppose the current effort to increase the threshold. As recently as October, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said he would not "be a party to any future effort to mitigate the consequences of Democratic mismanagement."

In striking a deal, McConnell backtracked on his



Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen speaks during a meeting with President Joe Biden and business leaders about the debt limit in the South Court Auditorium on the White House campus, Wednesday, Oct. 6, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press

word. But he also got much of what he wanted: Democrats taking a politically difficult vote without Republican support, while increasing the limit by a staggering dollar figure that is sure to appear in future attack ads.

"If they jam through another taxing and spending spree this massive debt increase will just be the beginning," the Kentucky Republican said Tuesday. The decision, however, has proven unpopular with some Republicans, particularly Donald Trump.

"GET RID OF MITCH!" Trump said in a statement issued Sunday.

Republican Sen. Mike Lee of Utah also criticized the intricate process Schumer and McConnell agreed to, which he warned could be used in the future to "launder" potentially unpopular votes while bypassing the Senate's normal mode of operation.

Under the agreement, an amendment was made to an unrelated Medicare bill that passed last week with Republican votes. It created a one-time, fast-track process for raising the debt limit that allowed Democrats to do so with a simple majority, bypassing the 60 vote threshold to avoid a GOP filibuster.

Lee said the process was intended to make the Re-

publican votes last week "appear as something other than helping Democrats raise the debt ceiling," which he said Republican leadership "committed, in writing no less, not to do."

Yet Republican arguments against debt limit increases often ignore inconvenient facts.

The nation's current debt load of \$28.9 trillion has been racking up for decades. Major drivers include popular spending programs, like Social Security and Medicare, interest on the debt and recent COVID-19 relief packages. But taxation is also a major factor, and a series of tax cuts enacted by Republican presidents in recent decades has added to it, too. □

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NY ethics board tells former Gov. Cuomo to return book money

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Former Gov. Andrew Cuomo was ordered by New York's ethics commission Tuesday to give up millions of dollars a publisher paid him to write a book about his response to the coronavirus pandemic.

An attorney for Cuomo immediately called the action unconstitutional and promised a fight.

Cuomo was directed to turn over proceeds earned from "American Crisis: Leadership Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic" within 30 days under a resolution approved 12-1 by the Joint Commission on Public Ethics, according to multiple media reports.

The order came a month after the commission voted to rescind the ethics approval it had given Cuomo before he entered into the \$5.1 million book deal.

"American Crisis" was published in October 2020, months before Cuomo resigned amid findings he sexually harassed 11 women. It was published by Crown Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House.

The staff of the commission granted approval of the



New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo prepares to board a helicopter after announcing his resignation on Aug. 10, 2021, in New York.

deal in July 2020, when his counsel told the commission that Cuomo agreed to not use any state personnel or resources to produce his book and that he would write it "entirely on his own time." But complaints later surfaced that state property, resources and personnel were used to prepare, write, edit and publish the book.

Cuomo has acknowledged that state employees

helped with tasks including editing the manuscript. But he's claimed that those employees were volunteering.

"JCOPE's actions today are unconstitutional, exceed its own authority and appear to be driven by political interests rather than the facts and the law," Cuomo attorney Jim McGuire said in a prepared statement. "Should they seek to enforce this action, we'll see

them in court."

There was no immediate comment from the attorney general's office, which would enforce the order. Efforts to claw back the money could be complicated, in part because Cuomo already disbursed \$1.5 million to a charity and a trust for his three daughters.

Cuomo disclosed in May that he was paid a \$3.1 million advance to write the

book and that he was to make another \$2 million on it over the next two years under the publishing contract. Cuomo spokesperson Richard Azzopardi had said then that after taxes and expenses, Cuomo netted \$1.5 million on the book last year, with \$500,000 of the profits donated to the United Way of New York State. The rest was being put in a trust for his daughters.

Spokespeople for Cuomo and Crown did not respond to emails Tuesday asking if Cuomo had received money for the book beyond the initial \$3.1 million.

A separate state Assembly investigation released last month found evidence that Cuomo, who resigned in August, had his staff spend copious amounts of time on the project.

Junior and senior staff members told investigators they were asked to perform book tasks during their work day, including transcribing dictations, printing and delivering documents, and attending meetings with agents and publishers. One senior state official sent and received 1,000 emails about the book, the legislative report said. □

Associated Press

Court won't allow reversal of Trump remain-in-Mexico policy

By KEVIN MCGILL

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A federal appeals court has dealt another blow to the Biden administration's attempt to undo former President Donald Trump's policy requiring people seeking asylum in the United States to remain in Mexico while their asylum claims are processed.

In a Monday night ruling, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans upheld a Texas-based federal judge's decision maintaining Trump's policy, formally known as the "Migrant Protection Protocols."

White House press secretary Jen Psaki declined Tuesday to say whether the administration would appeal to the Supreme Court and referred such inquiries to the Justice Department. She reiterated that President Joe Biden continues to believe the program is "ineffective" and "inhumane."

Biden's administration had appealed the August decision, but also began working with Mexico to reimplement the policy while the legal battle continued. Earlier this month, U.S. authorities sent the first two migrants back to Mexico under the reinstated policy.

"We note that decision this morning and obviously would reiterate that, while this is a program that we disagree with, the injunction dictating court-ordered implementation remains in effect, so we continue to comply with it in good faith," Psaki said.

Monday's ruling by three 5th Circuit judges said the administration's move to end the policy was arbitrary and violated a federal immigration statute requiring detention of those in the country illegally pending removal proceedings. If there is no capacity to detain them, Judge Andrew Oldham wrote for the panel, the statute allows the Department of Homeland Security to return them to "contiguous territories" while proceedings are pending. Biden suspended the program on his first day in office in January and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas formally ended it in June. But the state of Missouri and Texas sued to reinstate it. Texas-based U.S. District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk issued an injunction keeping the policy in play, saying the administration failed to follow required procedures for ending it and did not have capacity to detain all asylum seekers.

Mayorkas issued a revised version of the poli-

cy Oct. 29, but Monday's ruling said the revision "simply reaffirmed the Termination Decision that the States had been challenging all along."

When he issued the Oct. 29 policy revision, Mayorkas said the "Remain in Mexico" policy likely contributed to a drop in illegal border crossings in 2019 but with "substantial and unjustifiable human costs" to asylum-seekers who were exposed to violence while waiting in Mexico.

The panel that issued Monday's ruling included Oldham and Judge Kurt Engelhardt, both nominated to the court by Trump, and Judge Rhesa Barksdale, nominated by President George H.W. Bush. □



Blinken vows more U.S. military might in Indo-Pacific

By MATTHEW LEE

AP Diplomatic Writer

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)

— The United States will expand its military and economic relationships with partners in Asia to push back against China's increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Tuesday.

Blinken said the Biden administration is committed to maintaining peace and prosperity in the region and will do that by boosting U.S. alliances, forging new relationships and ensuring that the U.S. military maintains "its competitive edge."

"Threats are evolving, our security approach has to evolve with them. To do that, we will lean on our greatest strength: our alliances and partnerships," Blinken said in a speech in Indonesia, outlining the administration's Indo-Pacific plans. "We'll adopt a strategy that more closely weaves together all our instruments of national power diplomacy, military, intelligence with those of our allies and partners," he said.

That will include linking U.S. and Asian defense industries, integrating supply chains and cooperating on technological innovation, he said.

Later he signed a series of three agreements with Indonesia's foreign minister, including one that extends until 2026 an existing maritime cooperation pact that among other issues calls for enhanced joint U.S.-Indonesian naval exercises.

"It's about reinforcing our strengths so we can keep the peace, as we have done in the region for decades," he said. He did not elaborate further but the administration made waves earlier this year by agreeing to a pact that will see Australia produce nuclear-powered submarines.

Blinken insisted that the U.S. is not trying to force countries to choose between the United States and China, or seeking conflict with China. But he laid out a litany of complaints about



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, left, and Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi sign a Memorandum of Understanding at the Pancasila Building in Jakarta, Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2021.

Associated Press

"Beijing's aggressive actions" from "Northeast Asia to Southeast Asia and from the Mekong River to the Pacific Islands."

At a daily briefing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said Blinken's latest comments showed the U.S. was contradicting itself by "playing up the so-called China threat on the one hand while claiming that it has no intention to seek conflict with China on the other." Wang criticized the U.S. for "frequently sending ships and aircraft to the the area to flex muscles and stir up trouble."

Blinken is in Indonesia on the first leg of a week-long, three-nation tour of Southeast Asia that will also take him to Malaysia and Thailand. Countering China's growing aggressiveness in the region, particularly in the South China Sea, in Hong Kong and against Taiwan is prominent on his agenda.

"Countries across the region want this behavior to change," he said. "We do too."

"We are determined to ensure freedom of navigation in the South China Sea," he said. "It is also why we have an abiding interest in peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait."

Blinken said the U.S. "will forge stronger connections" with its five treaty

allies in the region Australia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea and Thailand boost ties between them and cultivate a stronger partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, many of whose members feel threatened by China.

"A strong and independent ASEAN has long been cen-

tral to tackle urgent crises and long-term challenges," Blinken said, in particular calling out the military rulers of Myanmar, also known as Burma, for their February takeover and subsequent crackdown on protesters. "We will continue to work with our allies and partners to press the regime to cease its indiscriminate vio-

lence, release all of those unjustly detained, allow unhindered access, and restore Burma's path to inclusive democracy," he said. Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang countered by accusing Washington of policies that "sow discord, undermine solidarity and disrupt cooperation."

China-U.S. relations have hit a new low over a range of issues, including Beijing's increasingly assertive claim to virtually the entire South China Sea that includes the construction of manmade islands topped with military infrastructure. That claim overlaps with those of four ASEAN members. Many Southeast Asian countries are economically dependent on China but see the U.S. as a counterweight to Beijing.

Blinken confined his remarks to the Indo-Pacific and China although he began his current overseas journey in Britain at a Group of Seven foreign ministers meeting that delivered a stern warning to Russia over Ukraine. □

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EU plan for sweeping update of Big Tech rules gains momentum

By **KELVIN CHAN**
AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — The European Union's ambitious plan to update its pioneering internet rules gained momentum Tuesday after a key committee passed measures requiring technology companies to better police content and lawmakers prepared to vote on regulations to rein in Big Tech.

The 27-nation bloc has for the past year been drafting a sweeping overhaul of regulations for digital companies, aimed at making sure tech giants like Google and Facebook, now renamed Meta, treat rivals fairly and protect users on their platforms.

The rules, which have been the subject of fierce lobbying from the tech industry, look set for approval from lawmakers, though they still face tough negotiations next year with EU bodies. The regulations, and similar ones in the United Kingdom to curb harmful online content, show Europe's role as a pacesetter for regulating the tech industry as a global movement picks up pace following whistleblower Frances Haugen's allegations that Facebook put profits ahead of safety. One set of EU rules, the



European Commissioner for Europe fit for the Digital Age Margrethe Vestager delivers her speech during a debate on the Digital Markets act at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, eastern France, Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2021.

Associated Press

Digital Services Act, aims to make tech companies more responsible for content on their platforms. The lead committee working on the rules said Tuesday that it approved amendments before sending the draft to the full EU Parliament for a vote, expected in January. "We are now democratically reclaiming our online environment," EU Parliament member Christel Schaldemose said. "The DSA is bringing EU tech regulation into the 21st century,

and it is about time." The committee approved a ban on platforms using "dark patterns" — deceptive or nudge techniques to influence users to do things that they don't intend to — as well as restrictions on targeting ads to children and requiring porn sites to register the identities of users uploading material. EU officials want to use another set of rules, known as the Digital Markets Act, to clamp down on the biggest online companies,

dubbed "digital gatekeepers," by laying out a list of dos and don'ts. With those rules, the bloc is seeking to prevent tech giants from dominating digital markets, a change from its previous practice of issuing big fines for past anti-trust violations. Google declined to comment on the EU rules. Facebook, Twitter, TikTok and Amazon didn't respond to requests for comment. EU lawmakers are set to vote Tuesday and Wednesday

on the draft Digital Markets Act, which includes giving the European Commission, the EU's executive branch, the power to halt "killer acquisitions" — when tech companies buy up innovative startups to block future competition.

There are also tighter restrictions on targeted online ads and stronger requirements for different messaging services or social media platforms to be able to work with each other — an effort to avoid the domination of a few companies because they have already established big networks of users. The Digital Markets Act's criteria for defining a gatekeeper have been tweaked to include companies earning at least 8 billion euros (\$9 billion) in annual revenue in Europe, have a market value of 80 billion euros, provide services in at least three EU countries, and have 45 million users and 10,000 business users.

Violations could be punished with whopping fines: up to 6% of a company's annual income under the Digital Services Act and up to 20% under the Digital Markets Act, which could work out to billions of dollars for wealthy Silicon Valley companies. □



This Jan. 6, 2018 file photo shows police crime scene tape marking off the property belonging to Barry and Honey Sherman, who were found strangled inside their home on Dec. 15, 2017.

Associated Press

By **ROB GILLIES**
Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Police are asking for the public's help after releasing video of a suspect in the killing of Ca-

nadian drug company billionaire Barry Sherman and his wife four years ago. Toronto Det. Sgt. Brandon Price said Tuesday the suspect spends "a very suspi-

Canada cops ask for help to ID suspect in billionaire murder

cious amount of time" in the immediate area of the Sherman home around the time the Sherman's were murdered.

Price provided the public with security camera footage of a man or woman walking down a sidewalk with a hat who seems to kick up his or her right boot as they takes each step. The video does not show the suspect's face. Price estimated the person is 5-6 to 5 foot-9 tall.

Police are asking for the public's help to identify the suspect. Sherman, who founded generic drugmaker Apotex Inc., and his wife, Honey, were found dead in their Toronto mansion

on Dec. 15, 2017. The two were hanging by belts from a railing that surrounds their indoor pool and were in a semi-seated position on the pool deck.

Sherman, 75, was known for litigiousness and aggressive business practices as he developed Apotex, which had a global work force of about 11,000. In "Prescription Games," a 2001 book about the industry, he mused that a rival might want to kill him.

"This individuals actions are highly suspicious," Price said. The couple was among Canada's most generous philanthropists, and their deaths shocked Canadian high society and

the country's Jewish community. They made numerous multimillion-dollar donations to hospitals, schools and charities and had buildings named in their honor. They hosted Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at a Liberal Party fundraiser in 2015.

The day after the bodies were found, some prominent news media outlets quoted unidentified police officials as saying the deaths appeared to be a murder-suicide. That upset the couple's four adult children, who then hired their own team of investigators and a pathologist, who conducted second autopsies on the Shermans. □



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Report links Colombia police to deaths of 11 in protests

By **MANUEL RUEDA**

Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)

— Colombian police killed at least 11 people during protests that broke out in September of last year, following the death of a taxi driver who was beaten to death while in police custody, a report backed by the United Nations found. The 182-page report published on Monday says that on Sept. 9-11, 2020, police in Colombia committed a “massacre” against civilians in low income neighborhoods. It says violence spun out of control because officers reacting to protests in front of police stations were unprepared to handle large crowds and were not given orders by their superiors to refrain from using firearms. According to the report's authors, 75 people were injured by firearms during the

three nights of protests in which police officers were also filmed destroying private property, and a total of 14 people were killed by police, protesters who hijacked a bus and civilians using firearms. Seventeen police stations in Colombia's capital city were set on fire and destroyed by protesters on Sept. 9-11 after videos emerged on social media of two policemen detaining a 44-year-old taxi driver who was drinking on a sidewalk, and beating him repeatedly while an onlooker begged for them to stop. Taxi driver Javier Ordoñez died that night from his injuries.

“Everyone made mistakes on the 9th and 10th of September, except for the victims of this tragedy,” said Carlos Negret, a lawyer and human rights expert who led the fact-finding re-

port. “Police acted with disproportionate use of force and went after the poorest people in the city,” he said. The report was commissioned last year by Bogotá's city government, which held a public ceremony where it asked for forgiveness from the victim's families. It is based on interviews with more than 90 witnesses, police officers and members of the victims' families and received technical assistance and financial support from the United Nations. The findings come as police in Colombia face greater scrutiny for their behavior during protests and different sectors call for the reform of an institution that has long been deployed to fight drug trafficking gangs and guerrilla groups in rural areas, and is poorly equipped to handle large crowds of civilians in urban

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A woman holding a Colombian flag stands next to a police officer in riot gear during a protest in Bogotá, Colombia, Monday, Sept. 21, 2020.

Associated Press

areas. Earlier this year, dozens of people died in protests over tax hikes and inequality that included roadblocks and small pockets of violent protesters, mixed

among mostly peaceful crowds. According to evidence gathered by Human Rights Watch, police in Colombia could be implicated in 25 of those deaths. □

Gasoline truck explodes in northern Haiti; dozens killed

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— A truck carrying gasoline overturned and exploded in a fireball in northern Haiti, engulfing cars and homes in flames as it killed more than 50 people and injured dozens of others in the latest disaster to hit a country whose troubles deepened greatly this year.

The explosion occurred late Monday in the coastal city of Cap-Haitien as survivors rushed outside and yelled as they observed how the fire consumed part of their neighborhood. Hours later, a local hospital was overwhelmed with injured people as it pleaded for basic supplies and more medical staff. Dozens of bodies lay near the explo-

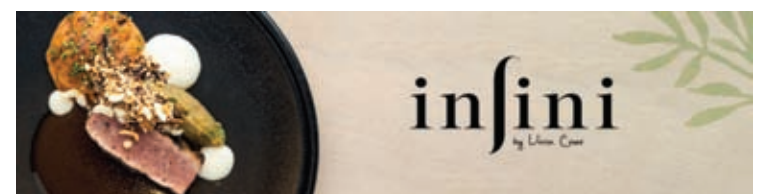


Firefighters stand next to what remains of a truck that was carrying gasoline after it overturned and exploded in Cap-Haitien, Haiti, Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2021.

sion site as some people used buckets to scoop up gasoline from the truck and the street to take back to their homes, Dave Larose, a civil engineer who works in Cap-Haitien, told The Associated Press. The explosion occurred as Haiti struggles with a severe

shortage of fuel and spiraling gas prices that recently forced hospitals to turn away patients, temporarily shut down gas stations, schools and businesses and prompted the government of U.S. and Canada to urge its citizens to leave while they still could. □

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InfiniAruba
infiniaruba



NOORD — Within walking distance of the finest white beaches and the clear blue ocean, Tuscany Residence Aruba is founded in one of the best and most popular neighborhoods of Aruba, close to the shopping and nightlife of Palm Beach. Tuscany Residence Aruba brings luxury living to a new level and they are very unique in their offerings with the Daimari Water Villas.

Around 180 exclusive properties will be built in all different sizes and prices, suitable for everyone's wishes and among them are 18 luxury Water Villas, all with a private terrace and direct access to the pool. The Daimari Water Villas include 2 and 3 bedrooms with wardrobes, 2 and 3.5 bathrooms, are fully furnished with a fully equipped German kitchen, fully air-conditioned and with wide aluminum sliding door to the covered pool terraces. Balcony and covered terraces are offered on the 2 floors unit and a private parking in front of the unit or your own garage is all yours. 50% of these amazing houses is already sold! There are still 6 residences available, including 2 with a one car garage.

Tuscany Residences now offer a special pre-construction discount, whereby your advantage increases to 9.7%. Pre-construction prices valid up to November 1st starting at US\$ 450,775 Turn-Key!

Dutch design

This luxury residential resort with various types of homes has many amenities such as swimming pools, restaurant, bar, offices, meeting rooms, gym, wellness and more. The combination of the beautiful Dutch modern international architecture and the Aruban palm trees creates a luxurious Aruban feeling and relaxed atmosphere in this resort. Tuscany Residence Aruba is the perfect choice for couples and families. Bas de Groot, Managing Director of Tuscany Residence Aruba adds, "We differ from traditional building, our design distinguishes itself." At 8 minutes' walk from Palm Beach, designed in a European style with high-quality materials, on property land and with buying possibilities from condos to townhouses to villas, Tuscany Residence is a dream comes true.

Tuscany Residence Aruba: Aruba's Luxury Residential Resort with unique Water Villas

We take care of it all

De Groot adds, "Our project is in continuous construction which builds confidence. He continues saying that maintenance, property management, rental program and safety are taken care of. "You can log in from abroad and manage your property for rental or view your administration." The great thing about Tuscany is that it offers everything equal to a resort but you do not need to wait for an elevator to bring you up, worry about parking space or noisy neighbors. "We have got space and different size offerings making this more a community feel rather than a packed condo building." He also emphasizes that the location is one of the best on Aruba as it is quiet and close to Palm Beach.

Reasons to buy

Reasons to consider Aruba property ownership, at Tuscany Residence Aruba

- Excellent price-quality ratio
- Beautiful designs & Quality construction
- Residential Park with all amenities
- Property land on top-location
- Varies properties in different price range
- Onsite Maintenance Team, Property Management & Rental Program

Are you looking for a safe, quiet, residential area where you will meet a mix of local and foreign owners? Do you feel for a warm community with amenities like wellness, gym, restaurants, pools and this all within a structure where the residence takes care of your property management while you are not here? Can the highest European quality and solid working structure take away your preoccupations while you are home? Than meet us, we are here to convince you with quality!

For an impression of Daimari Water Villas have a look at the website: <https://www.tuscanyresidencearuba.com/en/news>. For more information please contact Bas de Groot by phone +297-7332424 or email bas@tuscanyresidencearuba.com.

Tuscany Residence Aruba

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Test today, fly tomorrow during the holidays

PALM BEACH — MedCare's Fit2Fly COVID-19 Testing Centers has improved its services when it comes to turn around time for results. As of November its offering same day test results (previously it was 24 hours) on both PCR and Antigen tests.

This in part is to comply with the updated December 6, CDC requirement for travel to the United States, where all air passengers, regardless of vaccination status, must show a negative COVID-19 test taken no more than 1 day before travel to the United States.

MedCare Fit2Fly Testing Center at the Cove Mall is opposite the Holiday Inn and is open every day for walk-ins from 8 AM through 6 PM. MedCare's other location is situated at The Courtyard by Marriott Aruba Resort, is across the street from the RIU Hotel and is open every day from 8:00 AM until 2 PM. These two locations are at a stone's throw from your resort, condominium, or other vacation accommodation. Walk-ins are welcome.

MedCare Clinic, a high-quality medical clinic that specializes in urgent care for tourists and that has been appointed as the national COVID-19 clinic for tourists, and Laboratorio di Servizio, a full-service modern medical laboratory with state-of-the-art equipment, have partnered up to provide fast and reliable COVID-19 testing to all. Laboratorio di Servizio is ISO-15189:2012 accredited by the Dutch Council for Accreditation (M317).



For your convenience

For a selection of resorts in Aruba, MedCare has setup Testing Centers on site:

- Divi All Inclusive, Divi Dutch Village Beach Resort, Divi Golf, Divi Tamarijn
- Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort
- The Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort
- Hyatt Regency Aruba Resort and Casino
- Renaissance Wind Creek Aruba Resort
- The Ritz-Carlton Resort.

Please contact your front desk for more information on our Testing Centers at these properties.

Private bookings

For your convenience, Medcare also offers private testing at your accommodation/hotel room for a one-time service fee of \$120. This fee covers testing up to 10 people (one appointment, at one location and a specific time). Additional persons will be charged \$10 per person. Regular testing fees applies..□

For more information, please contact:

Phone: +297 280 0630
Open 7 days a week, 7 AM – 7 PM.
Email: info@medcare.aw
MedCare Clinic Aruba - Medcare Test Center

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AHATA: Hotel Occupancy was at 70% in November

ORANJESTAD — The Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association has released the most recent hotel performance results and announced that in November, hotels experienced a 70% occupancy rate.

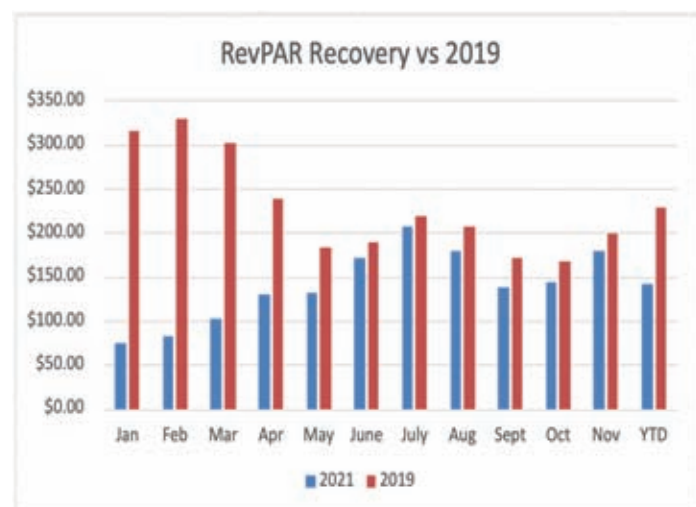
NOVEMBER 2021 DATA:

- **Occupancy:** The occupancy rate was 70%, which is a level of occupancy that is 16.8% lower than in November 2019.
- **ADR:** The average daily rate (for occupied rooms) was \$255.97, which is 8.6% higher than in 2019.
- **RevPAR:** The revenue per available room was 9.7% lower than a year ago, at \$178.72.

YEAR TO DATE DATA:

Year to date, Aruba's hotels experienced an average occupancy of 55.5%; a recovery rate of 65.6% compared to 2019. When compared to the same period last year, ADR is down 6% and RevPAR down 38.4%.

RevPAR HAS NOT RECOVERED YET:



OCCUPANCY FORECAST:

	Occupancy	Recovery compared to 2019
December	76%	92%
January	75%	85%
February	72%	78%
2021	57%	67%

TIMESHARE

AHATA's Timeshare properties experienced an 84% occupancy in November, and are projecting a 91% average occupancy in December. □

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Fundashon Stimami Sterilisami Help support the sterilization campaign of dogs and cats for 2022



ORANJESTAD — For years Fundashon Stimami Sterilisami has been serving the community by helping in reducing the number of suffering and abandoned dogs and cats on our island. With help of its contributors, Stimami Sterilisami sterilized approximately 26.397 dogs and cats between 2016 and 2021. All this at a cost of over Awg. 3 million.

However, this year with a heavy heart, they had to inform that their funds have been depleted. Their sponsors were unable to make donations this year and Aruba Bank's donation of Awg. 10.000 and Mr. Ewald Biemans, owner/CEO of Bucuti & Tara Beach resort and President of Stimami Sterilisami foundation, personal donation of Awg. 100.000 was not sufficient to continue any longer.

Now more than ever the efforts of this foundation are necessary seeing that there are more and more pets on the streets abandoned and without owners. Sterilization is the most effective and compassionate method to reduce the numbers of stray dogs and cats. Without sterilization a cat

is able to give birth to 62 kittens in a year and dogs up to 28 puppies, this will make all the hard work this foundation has been doing throughout the years in vain.

"We tried doing as much as we could this year and we looked everywhere on how to get funds, but unfortunately expense continue and no funds received," says Biemans. For that reason, on June 15th, 2021, the foundation took the hard decision to suspend its activities until new funds are received from past and future contributors for the national campaign of sterilization of pets.

Fundashon Stimami Sterilisami is a non-profit organization that uses 100% of its donations to offer partial or full subsidy for the sterilization procedure for house pets and strayed pets. Donations are extremely important for this foundation in order to continue its purpose. For more information go to www.stimamisterilisami.com. □

For donations:

Fundashon stimami sterilisami

Aruba Bank 6012630190
Swiftcode: ARUBAWAX

Millennial Money: Keep an eye on debt using visual aids

By **MELISSA LAMBARENA**
of NerdWallet

With an \$82,000 pile of debt, buying a house seemed far in the distance for Ehren Sixon and his wife, Florida residents who embarked on a debt-free journey in 2016. They opted for the debt snowball method, a debt payoff strategy that encourages motivation by quickly attacking the smallest balances first. The couple also tracked every milestone along the way with different visual aids as they paid off car loans, student loans and credit card debt. "We wanted to be able to track our progress and keep us motivated," says Sixon, a 32-year-old systems engineer and part-time YouTuber.

The internet is full of debt-tracking templates that can help you log milestones toward your debt-free goals. From coloring pages to spreadsheets, here's how you can use visual aids to demolish debt.

VISUAL AIDS MOTIVATE

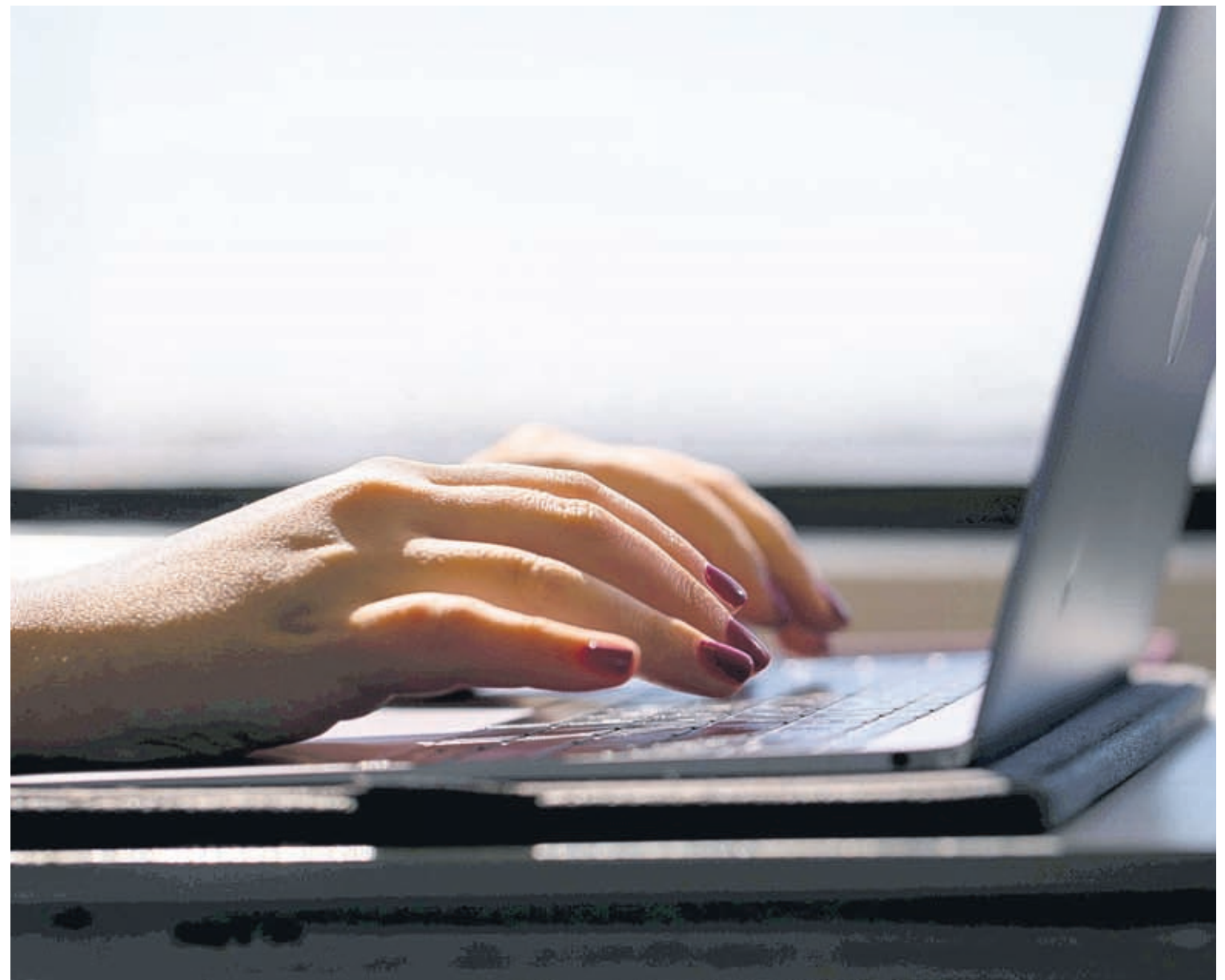
If you have a long journey ahead, a road map that logs your progress can offer support and encouragement.

"You get lots of little dopamine hits from checking off those smaller milestones or those smaller elements along the way, and that really keeps motivation going," says Katharine Lesiev, owner of She Minds Money, a financial therapy service based in Massachusetts. Lesiev favors creating something tangible that you can print out and view often at home.

TRACK YOUR PROGRESS IN SEVERAL WAYS

The Sixons turned to the internet to research debt-tracking solutions. As you explore your options, consider what will be most motivating for you.

— **Spreadsheets:** Sixon started with a spreadsheet to keep track of all lenders, balances and debts paid off. A spreadsheet can be as simple or elaborate as necessary. You can use it to log every payment to each lender or to update



A woman types on a laptop on a train in New Jersey on May 18, 2021.

balances after making a payment. A key benefit is that it can keep debt and information organized. It also pairs well with other tracking systems.

— **Printables for everyday viewing:** The Sixons also looked at templates online to facilitate checking off debt goals. They chose a thermometer for their fridge and later moved it to the front door as a daily reminder to stay true to their goal. At every monthly check-in, they would evaluate their progress and color in the thermometer upon paying off each 10% of their debt.

"With the spreadsheet, there were times when we just got so caught up in the outstanding balances instead of celebrating how much we'd paid off so far," Sixon says.

"I didn't realize how fun and exciting coloring a portion of that debt thermometer was, but it made our debt-free journey more

enjoyable."

Also consider coloring pages that display images like a home to represent a mortgage or a car to represent a loan. You can fill in the increments as you make payments.

For a different creative approach, a progress map can offer an appealing and discrete artistic design with unlabeled increments that you color in a similar way. For the Sixons, their bold, red thermometer became a conversation starter and inspired some friends to pay down debt.

"They were thankful that they saw the way we put it up in our house and they were able to do the same," he says.

— **Bullet journals:** A bullet journal is less visible than a page you can print and display, but it could offer more frequent engagement with your finances. Keep it as simple or creative as needed. In 2018, Kaila Penner, co-owner of

the blog Frugal Twins, drew an easy bar chart inside her bullet journal to track payments toward the last remaining \$24,000 from a car loan and two student loans. She colored in each bar with pink, green or blue ink after meeting every \$1,000 increment.

It's possible to break down the increments further and designate different pages for different kinds of debt. So instead of a bar chart, you could opt for drawing graduation hats, dollar bills or anything else that you can color in to represent debts paid off.

Like Sixon, Penner also used a spreadsheet throughout her entire journey, but it wasn't as motivating as the bullet journal. "Filling that in every month was much more satisfying for me," the Iowa resident says.

She also added a thermometer on her refrigerator door for daily visibility. With all three trackers, she logged her progress to

crush the debt.

RELY ON VISUAL AIDS LONG AFTER DEBT

The Sixons paid off their debt sooner than projected in 2018 by budgeting cash in envelopes and cutting back in categories like dining out and streaming subscription services. They now use a thermometer to track savings instead. In anticipation of the arrival of their baby girl, the Sixons recently colored in a thermometer indicating their savings toward a family-friendly vehicle.

"To come out in 2021 and buy a car with no car loan — fully paid off — and have it ready for our child, I didn't think we would be at this point in our financial journey," Sixon says. "It's incredible."

They're currently using multiple thermometers that remind them to focus on priorities like paying off their home and saving for renovations and travel. □

Associated Press

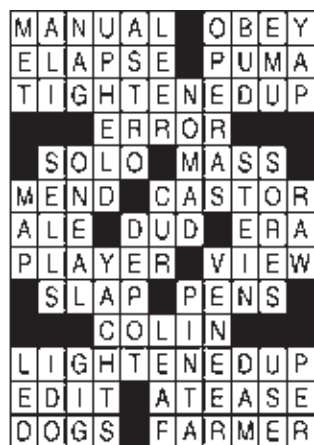
CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

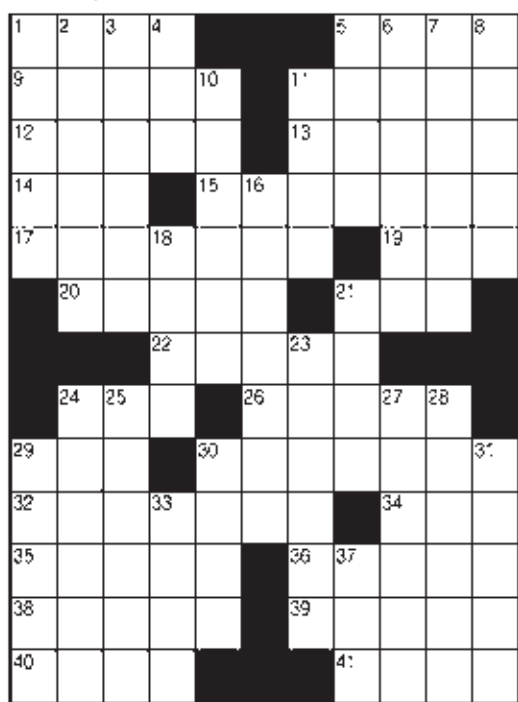
- ACROSS**
- 38 Begets
 - 1 Robe feature
 - 5 Letter after alpha
 - 9 Church sight
 - 11 Boer fighters
 - 12 Over-charge
 - 13 Arkansas's — Plateau
 - 14 "So that's it!"
 - 15 Amateur publication
 - 17 Fish in a can
 - 19 Silent assent
 - 20 Public outcry
 - 21 Fellows
 - 22 Put a stop to
 - 24 Bible vessel
 - 26 Harvests
 - 29 Verb for you
 - 30 Soup cracker
 - 32 COVID-19 fighter
 - 34 Opposite of oui
 - 35 Concerning
 - 36 Presentation aid

DOWN

- 1 Long stories
- 2 Island greetings
- 3 Queen Anne's house
- 4 Crone
- 5 Hype
- 6 "Seinfeld" character
- 7 Activate
- 8 Inquired
- 10 Purify
- 11 Map region
- 16 From Turkey's capital
- 18 Actor Powell
- 21 Sub-stance
- 23 Choose
- 24 Mecca's place
- 25 Athlete's dream
- 27 Party target
- 28 Was a noisy sleeper
- 29 Sailor's cry
- 30 Plops down
- 31 Contest form
- 33 Pool tools
- 37 Holbrook of "The Firm"



Yesterday's answer



12-15

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-15

CRYPTOQUOTE

I Q F G B Q D F Z F J S A B L L S

N E O A I C O H F T B Q H E Q R O A B O

I O A F J U U A I C X H B R J F F N E O A

O A F T. — R I F O A F

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT IF YOU HAVE DONE A LITTLE THING WELL, YOU CAN DO A BIGGER THING WELL, TOO. — DAVID STOREY

U.S. study: Record highs, rain and beaver damage in Arctic

By SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

The Arctic continues to deteriorate from global warming, not setting as many records this year as in the past, but still changing so rapidly that federal scientists call it alarming in their annual Arctic report card. The 16th straight health check for the northern polar region spotlighted the first ever rainfall at Greenland summit station, record warm temperatures between October and December 2020, and the new problem of expansion of beavers in the Arctic.

"The trends are consistent, alarming and undeniable," U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration chief Rick Spinrad said presenting the findings by 111 scientists from 12 countries at the American Geophysical Union conference Tuesday. "The loss of the great white cap that once covered the top of the world is one of the most iconic indicators of climate



A drop of water falls off an iceberg melting in the Nuup Kangerlua Fjord near Nuuk in southwestern Greenland, Tuesday, Aug. 1, 2017.

Associated Press

change." "The Arctic is Earth's air conditioning," Spinrad said. "Billions of people rely on its moderating influence on climate. We have a narrow window of time to avoid very costly, deadly and irreversible future climate impacts." The 2020-2021 polar year scientists study the Arctic on a yearly basis from October to September was

only the 7th warmest on record. However, October to December in 2020 set a record for the warmest autumn.

This report card comes out as the Arctic warms two to three times faster than the rest of the planet. The region's melting ice opens the door to more pressures, including the potential for more oil and gas drilling and more mining and more tensions between countries wanting to exploit the area. For the people who live there, it means having to adapt to a ground that is getting softer as permafrost melts and changes to traditional hunting and fishing.

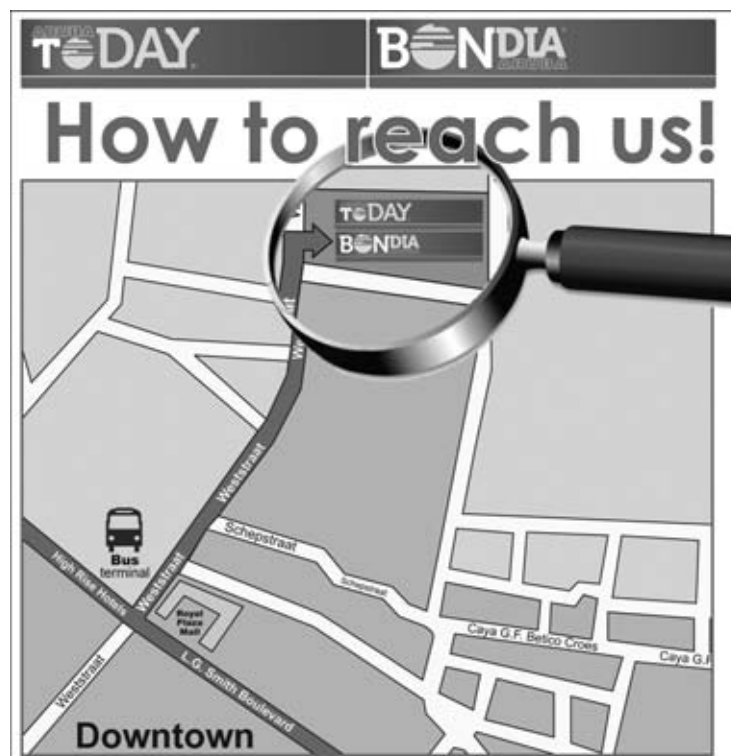
"It's really tough for us to live up there, let alone thrive," said report co-author Kaare Sikuaq Erickson, a community science liaison from the Bering Sea village of Unalakleet.

When sea ice hit its annual minimum in September for how far it extends, it was only the 12th lowest on record. But the rarer thick sea ice, which stays around for more than a year, was the second lowest at the end of the summer since records began in 1985, reflecting a problem in the more crucial type of ice for the Arctic. "The sea ice loss in the Bering Sea is extremely, extremely scary," Erickson said.

It's an ecosystem collapse situation. I think the sea ice loss in my region is probably the biggest concern." □

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Divi Links Golf

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2 BR week # 51 room #2205/2206
24 weeks remain \$18 K
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Divi Links Golf

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Private Islands
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Ocean view \$ 11 K
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3 BR week 51 room #1506 \$25K
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1 BR 1 1/2 bath week 49 and 50
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\$8 K each week
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14th floor with 31 weeks remain
\$8 K
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HTTA

House for sale

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2 Bed Ocean view \$16,500
2 Bed Garden view \$15,500
3 Bed Ocean view \$28,000
WK 51 Oceanside \$52,000
WK 52 Oceanside \$55,000
WK 7 and 14 - all views
GOLD SEASON
2 Bed Oceanfront \$14,000
2 Bed Oceanside \$11,000
2 Bed Ocean view \$8,000
2 Bed Garden view \$6,000
3 Bed Ocean view \$13,000

Marriott Aruba Ocean Club

PLATINUM SEASON
2 Bed Oceanfront \$29,000
2 Bed Ocean view \$18,000
1 Bed ocean front \$13,000
1 Bed ocean View \$11,000
GOLD SEASON
2 Bed Oceanfront \$14,000
2 Bed Ocean view \$9,500
1 Bed oceanfront \$9,000
1 Bed ocean View \$6,500

** Destination Points \$8.00 per point

La Cabana Beach Resort

1 Bed wk 51 \$6,500

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2 bed wk 11 unit 101 ground floor
expires 2037 \$17,400
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Seroe Preto Tel. 584 4833

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Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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Narcotics Anonymous
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Fundacion Contra Violencia
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Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118



The AP names its Breakthrough Entertainers of 2021



This combination photo shows the eight AP breakthrough entertainers of the year, from left, Damson Idris, Anupam Tripathi, Rachel Zegler, Rauw Alejandro, Adrienne Warren, Saweetie, Simu Liu, and Sydney Sweeney.

By The Associated Press
If 2020 was a pandemic-induced pause, 2021 was when things started up again, albeit slowly and timidly. But that doesn't describe this year's eight Associated Press' Breakthrough Entertainers of the Year: They seized their masks — and the moment. They are Damson Idris, Simu Liu, Rachel Zegler, Rauw Alejandro, Adrienne Warren, Saweetie, Anupam Tripathi and Sydney Sweeney. Each found ways to share their art despite virus fears and variants. The year went quickly for Zegler, who had beat out thousands for the part of Maria in Steven Spielberg's "West Side Story." The pandemic pushed the film's release a year but she didn't

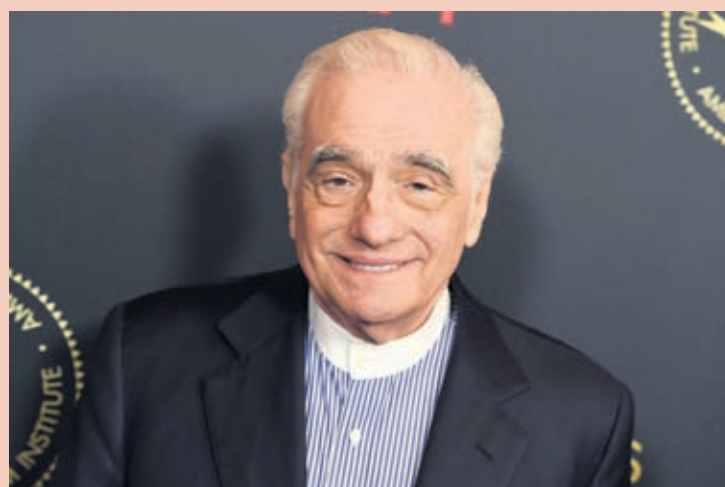
stop. Zegler was cast in and filmed the sequel to "Shazam" and snagged the role of Snow White in the live-action reimagining with Gal Gadot playing the evil queen. Then there was all the press for "West Side Story" and even a Met Gala invite. "I stepped out of my comfort zone," she says. Liu smashed through the Marvel Cinematic Universe's comfort zone as its first Asian-led superhero stand-alone in "Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings." His was a career-making turn as Shang-Chi, who combines Spider-Man's aw-shucks sweetness with lethal fists. The path Tripathi took was far slower. For more than a decade, the Indian actor

who relocated to South Korea more than a decade ago, spent countless hours singing in humble theaters and taking on minor film gigs. Then came "Squid Game" and sudden, massive popularity. The pandemic stopped live theater in its tracks, so Adrienne Warren pivoted. While waiting for Broadway to restart, she turned to a project she never would have been able to had she still been starring in the title role in "Tina — The Tina Turner Musical." Warren lost and gained 30 pounds to play civil rights catalyst Mamie Till-Mobley — whose son Emmett Till was brutally murdered in the Jim Crow South — in the upcoming ABC series "Women of the Move-

ment." She co-founded the Broadway Advocacy Coalition, which uses storytelling to dismantle the systems that perpetuate racism. And when Broadway resumed, she came back to earn her first Tony Award. Idris' popularity has grown exponentially over the past four seasons of the critically-acclaimed series "Snowfall." His breakthrough role landed him other opportunities including "The Twilight Zone," "Black Mirror," "Farming" and Netflix's "Outside the Wire." Sweeney sealed her stardom in 2021 with major roles in the hit HBO miniseries, "The White Lotus," and Amazon's sexy psychological thriller, "The Voyeurs." She also filmed the hotly anticipated second season

of "Euphoria," which drops in January. On top of all that, Sweeney also started her own production company. Bay Area-rapper Saweetie had landed three Top 40 hits in the last three years but in 2021 she earned two Grammy nods, made her debut on "SNL" and hosted the MTV Europe Music Awards in Hungary. Like her, Alejandro has been on the rise for the past few years, but 2021 catapulted him into another level of success — five songs in the top 50, sold out shows and Grammy recognition. "This year has been my best, and I hope the next one surpasses this one," he says, something his other nominees might agree with. □

Associated Press



Martin Scorsese appears at the 2020 AFI Awards in Los Angeles on Jan. 3, 2020.

Associated Press

By JAKE COYLE
AP Film Writer
NEW YORK (AP) — Martin Scorsese's alma mater, New York University, is establishing a film institute in his name after a gift from George Lucas and Melody Hobson. The formation of the Martin Scorsese Institute of Global Cinematic Arts was to be announced Tuesday by NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. The institute will in-

clude a virtual production center, the Martin Scorsese Department of Cinema Studies and support for student scholarships — with tuition assistance for those selected as "Scorsese scholars." A large donation from the Hobson/Lucas Family Foundation — the non-profit run by the "Star Wars" filmmaker and his wife, Hobson, co-chief executive of Ariel Invest-

Martin Scorsese Institute to be established by NYU

ments and chairwoman of Starbucks Corporation — made the new institute possible. "This is such a singular and remarkable honor for me, and I thank my old, dear friend George Lucas, his wife Melody Hobson and their remarkable foundation for this honor," Scorsese said in a statement. "Their generosity of spirit and deed is deeply moving for me, and doubly so since this state-of-the-art institute will be housed at my beloved alma mater, NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. I only wish that my parents were around to see this. They would have been so proud." Scorsese has a long history with NYU's film program. As a student, he made his first short films there, including 1967's "The Big Shave,"

a six-minute Vietnam War allegory in which a young man shaves his face until it's a bloody mess. Scorsese earned his masters at NYU in 1968 and continued after teaching undergraduate filmmaking. The school also gave him an honorary degree in 1992, and Scorsese currently sits on Tisch's Dean's Council. Virtual production is a fast-evolving mode of movie-making that endeavors to immerse filmmakers in a real-time digital sandbox by using technologies like game-engine software, motion capture and augmented or virtual reality. It puts actors and filmmakers into a soundstage environment where digital meets physical. While such effects are more closely associated with more

spectacle-driven filmmakers, Scorsese used some of its tools in the de-aging process in "The Irishman." He says virtual production represents "a quantum leap forward." "George and I have known one another for what seems like a lifetime, and he has always been driven to create new, imagined worlds on screen," said Scorsese. "His urge — his obsession — is part of a tradition that begins with the cinema itself and the films of Georges Méliès. I suppose you could say that my own obsession grows out of the cinema's other parallel tradition, which originates with the Lumière Brothers: exploring the mystery and the beauty and the strangeness of the world before us, of ongoing life." □

Wild's Guerin promoted to take over as US men's Olympic GM

By JOHN WAWROW
AP Hockey Writer

Minnesota Wild general manager Bill Guerin was promoted to take over the men's U.S. Olympic hockey team on Tuesday, two months after Stan Bowman's resignation in the wake of the Chicago Blackhawks' sexual assault scandal.

"Unfortunately, things turned out the way they did and we're here today," Guerin said during a USA Hockey Zoom conference call.

"But you know, we have a job to do and we have to remain focused and steadfast on that," he said. "It's been a bumpy road getting here, but we're here and we have to focus on the task at hand."

Initially named the U.S. team's assistant GM, Guerin replaces Bowman, who resigned in October after an investigation determined Blackhawks' officials mishandled a player's allegations against an assistant coach during the team's Stanley Cup run in 2010. Bowman was the Blackhawks GM.

Guerin's promotion comes less than two months before the Beijing Winter Games open in February. He New York Rangers GM Chris Drury, the team's assistant general manager,



USA's Chris Drury celebrates after scoring against Norway in the first period of a preliminary round men's ice hockey game at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics in Vancouver, British Columbia, Thursday, Feb. 18, 2010.

have only about a month to select a team and perhaps a backup team, given the uncertainty as to whether NHL players opt out from participation due to COVID-19 protocols. Guerin is placing his emphasis on NHL participation.

"There are a lot of moving parts that still have to be discussed and hopefully answers so that everybody can feel the best about

sending the best players to the Olympics from the NHL," he said.

USA Hockey executive John Vanbiesbrouck said Plan B — minus NHL participation — would involve drawing upon a pool of players currently competing in the minor leagues, colleges and Europe. That's similar to what USA Hockey did in 2018, when the NHL opted out from participating in the South Korea

Games.

However, Vanbiesbrouck added, "We are focused, as Bill said, on Plan A. And hopefully we get there."

Guerin's promotion was delayed because of his potential ties to a lawsuit involving his former team, the Pittsburgh Penguins. The Penguins recently settled a lawsuit alleging a former minor-league coach molested the wife of one of his assistants in 2018.

Guerin was one of the Penguins assistant GMs at the time and responsible for overseeing the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton team. The lawsuit alleged Guerin asked the assistant to keep the reason for Donatelli's termination quiet, and that the team punished the assistant for reporting the assault and later terminated his position under the guise of pandemic-related staff cuts.

Guerin denies his role in the allegations.

Looking ahead, Guerin said he is working off a 55-player list of NHL players, and declined to rule out the possibility of selecting Jack Eichel, who is recovering from artificial disk replacement surgery.

"I won't rule out anybody," Guerin said, without revealing the conversations he's had with Eichel's agent.

Sidelined since March, the former Buffalo Sabres captain had surgery last month after being traded to the Vegas Golden Knights. Eichel's timeline for recovery was placed at three months.

Guerin is from Worcester, Massachusetts, and was a three-time Olympian. Drury is from Trumbull, Connecticut, and was teammates with Guerin while the two competed at the Winter Games in 2002 and 2006. □

Associated Press

Verlander, Astros finalize \$25 million, 1-year contract

HOUSTON (AP) — Justin Verlander's \$25 million, one-year contract with the Houston Astros has been finalized, nearly a month after it was agreed to.

The pitcher and the Astros reached an agreement on Nov. 17 subject to a successful physical. While the deal was reported before the collective bargaining agreement expired Dec. 1 and a signing freeze began, Major League Baseball and the players' association did not approve it until this week.

Verlander's agreement includes a \$25 million salary for 2022 and a \$25 million

player option for 2023 conditioned on him pitching 130 or more innings in 2022. Verlander became a free agent after completing a \$94 million, three-year contract with the Astros. He played in just one game in the past two seasons.

He made just one start in 2020, pitching six innings on July 24 in a win over Seattle on opening day before being placed on the injured list with strained right forearm. He attempted a comeback, but announced on Sept. 19, 2020, that he needed Tommy John surgery and underwent the procedure on Oct. 1.

He said earlier this year that his rehabilitation was going well and added he disliked playing only one game in the time that deal covered. "That gnaws at me," he said. "But ... this was an unfortunate injury that nobody could have seen coming. But I still do like to earn my keep."

The 38-year-old right-hander is a two-time Cy Young Award winner and the 2011 AL MVP. Verlander spent his first 13 seasons with the Detroit Tigers before being traded to the Astros on Aug. 31, 2017. His stellar performance after the late deal helped Houston to its




Houston Astros pitcher Justin Verlander throws to the St. Louis Cardinals during the first inning of a spring training baseball game on March 3, 2020, in Jupiter, Fla.

Associated Press

first World Series title that season. He is 43-15 with a 2.45 ERA and 640 strikeouts in 74 starts for the Astros. Verlander went 21-6 with a 2.58 ERA in 2019, striking out a career-high 300 and throwing the third no-hit-

ter of his career to win his second career Cy Young Award. He pitched 223 innings, most in the majors, and made six more starts in the postseason as the Astros reached the World Series. □



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Teams cautious as big names land on NFL's virus list

By **ARNIE STAPLETON**
AP Pro Football Writer

DENVER (AP) — Ndamukong Suh, Chris Harris Jr., Aaron Rodgers, Cameron Jordan. Ty Montgomery, Mark Ingram.

No, it's not a Pro Bowl ballot, just a smattering of the big names that have landed on the NFL's evermore crowded reserve/COVID-19 list this season.

De'Vondre Campbell, Davante Adams, Harrison Smith, Amari Cooper, Randy Gregory.

Like any fan setting a fantasy roster, filling out a betting sheet or just cheering on their team, Denver Broncos coach Vic Fangio can't help but raise an eyebrow or two at the relentless stream of stars popping up on the virus list, landing themselves in quarantine and their teams in a conundrum.

"You notice it, obviously, and you know it can happen to you. It's not just, 'Well, that's their problem,'" Fangio said Monday as three dozen players across the league were being added to the reserve/COVID-19 list either because they contracted the virus or were close to someone who did.

Chandler Jones, Keenan Allen, T.J. Watt, Minkah Fitzpatrick, Ben Roethlisberger, Nick Chubb, David Njoku. Among the 36 fresh additions to the list on Monday were Jalen Ramsey and Tyler Higbee, who missed the Los Angeles Rams' 30-23 win at Arizona that tightened the NFC race.

"It could end up being our problem just like last year — if you remember — when we were on the wrong side of New England's problem," Fangio said. "We lost our bye and had our game get postponed. I told the team, 'Hey, it could come



Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger (7) runs from Minnesota Vikings defensive tackle Sheldon Richardson (90) during the first half of an NFL football game, Thursday, Dec. 9, 2021, in Minneapolis.

our way at some point.' "It did, as you guys know. Yeah, you notice it."

Last year, the league made the Broncos play a game without a quarterback because all four of theirs were quarantined after one of them came down sick with COVID-19 and the rest were deemed close contacts. NFL owners breathed a huge sigh of relief when they got through the entire 2020 regular and postseason without a cancellation — and the league was thankful Tom Brady didn't get sick until after he'd won his seventh Super Bowl.

Even with vaccinations available this season, there are more than 100 players who have refused to get jabbed, putting themselves and their teams at risk down the stretch and into the playoffs.

If a vaccinated player gets a breakthrough case of COVID-19, he can return to action as soon as he's asymptomatic and has two negative tests 24 hours apart. Unvaccinated play-

ers who get sick have to sit out a minimum of 10 days as Rodgers, the league's reigning MVP, had to do last month.

The league says the vaccination rate among players is more than 94.3%, which still leaves about 126 of the 2,208 players on 53-man active rosters and 16-man practice squads unvaccinated and therefore subject to stricter protocols such as daily nasal tests and a prohibition from interacting with teammates in the locker room or even on their own time away from work.

Last summer, more than two dozen Pro Football Hall of Famers teamed up as part of a community outreach and education program to help build COVID-19 vaccination confidence in the general public.

They also had a message for NFL players who didn't want to get vaccinated. "We're very fortunate to play a sport, a game, and get paid extremely well for it. And here in America the

one thing we deem very necessary is our freedom of choice," said Rod Woodson, class of 2009. "And they do get to exercise that freedom by not getting vaccinated."

"But the one thing I love that the NFL did this year was to say, OK, you're exercising your freedom not to get it, well we're going to exercise our freedom as a company. If you cause a game to be canceled, first of all you're going to forfeit that and then we're going to fine you. And nobody gets paid on either team on top of that."

With nearly 19 of every 20 players fully vaccinated, that looks very unlikely to happen over the final month. Instead, teams and their fan bases have paid the price when their superstars get sick, as when Rodgers had to miss the Packers' showdown at Kansas City last month and understudy Jordan Love stumbled in his first NFL start.

Many teams such as Fangio's are taking all the pre-

cautions they can as an unprecedented two dozen franchises race toward Christmas with a realistic shot at the playoffs next month.

"The offense is meeting over in the indoor (facility) so they can be spread out. The defense is over here" in the team's main headquarters, Fangio said. "But they're in the big rooms, so they're spread out. We don't have to do that, but we've been doing that for a good bit right now. We'll see where it goes this next day or two. We may have to do more."

The Broncos are among a handful of teams who've had 10 or more players from their 53-man roster land on the reserve/COVID-19 list this season. Others with big numbers include the Cowboys, Vikings, Titans, Browns and Jets.

Among those with the lowest numbers of players on their 53-man roster landing on the virus list are the Seahawks, 49ers, Raiders, Colts and Jaguars.

The NFL announced Monday it is requiring coaches, front-office staff and team personnel to receive a COVID-19 booster by Dec. 27. The league's requirement extends to all Tier 1 and Tier 2 individuals who have previously received the vaccine. Though players are in the Tier 1 designation along with coaches and trainers, the mandate doesn't apply to players because discussions with the NFL Players Association are ongoing.

Still, it's a stark reminder than this pandemic isn't over yet, and the league remains on high alert to anything that will thwart a champion from being crowned at Super Bowl 56 in Los Angeles two months from now. □